

Remarks in Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
July 9, 2004

*The President.* Thank you all for coming. Thanks for having me. Please be seated, unless, of course, you don't have a seat. [Laughter] What a spectacular drive in here. As you know, we're on a bus, and it's hard to park a bus in a small parking lot, by the way. [Laughter] But we drove through this beautiful countryside and saw thousands of your fellow citizens there. They were so warm and gracious in their hospitality. I'm sorry they're all not here so I can thank them in person. Hopefully, somebody is recording this on a TV camera so they'll hear my thanks. But it is a really—what a special part of the world. And thanks for having me.

I'm here to talk about the fact that I'd like to be reelected President for a reason. You know, I love holding the office. It's—got a nice airplane to fly on and—[laughter]—housing is good. [Laughter] But I want to serve for 4 more years because I want the country to be safer, stronger, and better. I have a reason to ask for your vote.

And I'm going to spend a lot of time in Pennsylvania because I want to carry Pennsylvania this time. It's an important State. And we're going to—and we're going to.

I'm sorry that Laura is not with me. She's a fabulous First Lady, a great wife, and a wonderful mother—of my daughter Jenna, who is traveling with me today, University of Texas grad. How about that—in 4 years. [Laughter] Laura sends her best. She's campaigning herself. She is a—she's come to realize what I know in that you can make a difference in people's lives in so many different ways in the positions that we're honored to hold.

I remember the time she gave the Afghan radio address—radio address, my radio address, and talked about women in Afghanistan. And it was such a comforting

and reassuring voice, I'm sure, for the women there who had been so brutalized by the Taliban, to hear the First Lady speak. But the feedback from the radio address was really good. And she—I remember her coming back upstairs in the White House and saying, "Gosh, they heard me." People heard that somebody in America cares for them, that when we talk about young girls in America and our desire for them to be able to realize their dreams, we also said the same thing about young girls in Afghanistan. And that message resonated. And Laura was the messenger, and it made such a difference to those ladies and women in Afghanistan who heard her voice that it, in return, made a great difference for her. She knows what I know: One, it's a honor to serve our country; and secondly, you have an opportunity to affect people's lives in a positive way. And that's exactly what she's doing.

I want to thank Joe Pitts for introducing me. Joe is a good, strong, solid United States Congressman with a lot of integrity and a lot of decency, and I'm proud to serve with him. I just want to thank you, Joe, very much.

I'm traveling with the United States senior Senator, Arlen Specter. I'm proud to be traveling with him. I hope he wins, and I'd like you to support him. We discarded Santorum somewhere up the road. [Laughter] Actually, he's off to York to greet us there, which is our next stop.

I want to thank very much members of the statehouse who are here, particularly State Senator Noah Wenger. I'm honored you're here, Senator. Thank you for coming. I also want to thank—thanks for being here. State Senator Charlie Dent, who has tossed his hat in the ring for the United States Congress, is traveling today, as is congressional candidate Scott Paterno.

Thank you for coming, Scott, appreciate you being here.

I know we've got some grassroots activists who are here. Those are the people who are actually going to turn out the vote and do all the work. My job is to set the vision and explain to people what I want to do for 4 more years. And the grassroots activists' jobs are to find those who are willing to vote. I think there's a lot of potential voters here, at least it seems like it. There was a lot of signs on the road—[laughter]—a lot of friendly waves. So I hope you garner them up and remind them that we all have a duty to do in a democracy and get them to the polls, turn them out, register people. We've got a web site, georgewbush.com, which is a place where you can sign up and get some marching orders and gives you something to do if you're interested in helping in the campaign.

I spend a lot of time thanking people who are campaigning on our behalf because I know it's hard work and it takes time out of your busy lives. And so the first thing I want to do is, for those who are willing to help Dick Cheney and me, I want to thank you very much for what you're doing. It makes a difference. And I'm confident—I'm confident our work will pay off come November 2d of this year.

You're probably wondering why would you—I mean, I imagine we could have drawn thousands of people. As a matter of fact, tonight in York, we are going to have a giant crowd. But why would you forgo a big crowd to come to this entrepreneurial haven to talk about the issues confronting the country? And the answer is, is because this is a perfect example of what I try to talk about when it comes to the economy. That's why I'm here. I'm here because our country's economy is strong, because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. And the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in this company, see. This is a small business that succeeds because the owners and the fellow workers work hard to make

it succeed. It doesn't succeed because of business—I mean Government. It succeeds because of the business acumen of the people running this enterprise.

And so I want to thank very much the Lapp family for their hospitality. I am honored that you would host me today. It's not easy to host people called President. [Laughter] It's just about—5 buses, 4 vans, 200 policemen, and here we are. [Laughter]

I want to thank Greg and Tim. Those are the Lapp boys. They bought the business from their dad, who is with us as well, and Mom. Thank you all for being here. It was a wise decision. There's nothing wrong with a couple of brothers following in a father's footsteps. [Laughter]

I told you one of the things I'm running for is to make the country stronger. A strong country really starts with having a country which economy is healthy. That's a strong country. If you got a strong economy, you've got a strong country. It means people are able to work.

We had a tough time for a while, because the country was in recession. That means it wasn't growing. It means it was going backwards. It means employees were wondering whether or not they were going to be working the next day. It means small-business owners are wondering whether or not they want to invest capital at all. In other words, you don't grow unless you invest capital. People were nervous during the recession.

Then we got attacked, and I'm going to talk a little bit about making America safer. But we got attacked on September the 11th. It hurt our economy. In other words, you're in a recession; then we have an attack. And the attack cost us a lot. It cost us dollars. It reminded us that the world has changed dramatically from the world that we thought we lived in. It was a tough moment in the history of this country. Yet it was a moment that we were able to overcome, because the great strength of America is the people of the country. They

refused to be intimidated by terrorists. The entrepreneurs of our country, although set back some, still had that spirit within them, the desire to grow their businesses and to provide employment opportunities for people.

Then we discovered something else which hurt us, and that was that some of our citizens forgot to tell the truth, that they were given positions of responsibility and they weren't responsible citizens. And we uncovered corporate scandals. And we acted, by the way. Instead of wringing our hands trying to figure out what to do, we got together with the Congress, passed tough laws. The message is clear now that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America, that we expect responsible behavior for those who are in positions of responsibility.

And then another subject I'll talk about here in a minute: I made some tough decisions to defend the country, and we went to war. During a period of war, it's hard for the economy to grow because people don't feel confident. The concept of war is negative, not positive. I don't know if you remember, but we used to have on our TV screens "March to War." And if you're a small-business owner or a big-business owner, when you're thinking you're marching to war, there's a sense of uncertainty with that. People don't want to invest in an uncertain environment.

All these became hurdles for our economy. We overcame them. I'm confident one of the reasons we overcame them is because we cut the taxes on the people who work in America. We let people keep more of their own money. I say we overcame them—you'd expect me to say that; it's an election year. But others say it too. After all, the economy is strong right now. It's growing and getting stronger. Obviously, there's more to do, but it's growing. Listen, we added 1.5 million jobs since last August. That's a good sign.

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate is 5.1 percent. That's good news for people who

are trying to find jobs. Obviously, the unemployment rate can go lower. We expect it to go lower because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. Manufacturing is up.

One of the great statistics in America is the fact that more people—the homeownership rate in the country is the highest ever. And that includes amongst minority citizens. I'll tell you why that's great. It's because when people own something, they have a vital stake in the future of the country. We want people owning things in America. The idea of somebody owning their own home is just a fantastic part of making sure the future of the country is a bright and hopeful future. I mean, I love the idea—think about people from all walks of life being able to say, "Welcome to my home. This is my piece of property. I own this." And today, the homeownership rates are the highest they've been ever. And I know that's good for the homebuilders. It's also good for the homeowners. And that's a positive sign. In other words, times are good. But there's more we can do—there's more we can do.

Let me tell you one of the—some of the reasons I have made the decisions I made on the economy. And the best way to do it is to start with the Lapp boys. That's what I call them, at least. *[Laughter]* When you cut taxes, it means people have more money to spend. And first of all, principle one is that it's not the Government's money; it's your money to begin with. And the second principle is that when you have more of your own money to spend, you'll demand an additional good or a service. And when you do that, somebody has to produce the additional good or a service. That's the way the marketplace works. And when somebody produces the additional good or a service, it means somebody is likely to find a—keep a job, and as those additional—as demand expands, people are going to need to expand their businesses—in other words, hire more people—in order to meet the demand. That's how I think the economy works; others do as well. As

a matter of fact, that's what the tax relief is showing us, that the economy works that way.

One of the key components of economic vitality is the small-business sector of America. Now, two points on this. One, most small businesses, just like Lapp Electrical, pay individual income-tax rates. A lot of Americans don't know that. This company pays taxes at the individual income-tax rate because they are what they call a Subchapter S corporation. Or many small businesses are what they call sole proprietorships; they, too, pay tax at the individual income-tax rate. So when you hear me talk about cutting taxes, it is very important for people to connect that to small businesses. Most small businesses pay taxes at the individual income-tax rate.

Secondly, most new jobs in America are created by small businesses. Therefore, it makes sense to put economic policy in place that stimulates the growth in the small-business sector. If you're interested in creating jobs, if you're interested in people being able to find work—and most new jobs are created by small businesses—it makes sense to have economic policy focus on small businesses. And that's exactly what our tax relief plan did.

Now, there was a debate in Washington as to who ought to get tax relief. My attitude is everybody ought to get tax relief. If you're going to have any tax relief at all, the only fair thing to do is to give everybody tax relief. I really don't think you want a Government that's fixing to cut tax rates say, "Only these kind of people deserve it." That means politics is getting to decide. Our policy said, if you're paying taxes, all rates are reduced. And it's helped Lapp Electric, and that's important.

I'll tell you why it's important, because they've added five workers since January. That's what I'm interested in. I'm interested in people working. And so I come into this business, and the two Lapp boys say to me, "I've added—we've added five workers. Your tax relief helped us. It en-

abled us to grow." And the definition of growth is five new workers working here. And that's good news—guess for who: the five people that are working.

Part of the tax relief plan also enabled people to have what they call bonus depreciation. In other words, it encourages people to make investment. And so one of the reasons I came is to try to connect investment to their decisionmaking to jobs. Greg and Tim told me they're going to invest \$80,000 this year. Part of it is because they see a better tomorrow; part of it is because the Tax Code said, "If you do so, you'll get a little extra, a little extra help in the Tax Code." And they're going to buy new mezzanines, budget trucks, and service vans. That's called investment. In other words, they set aside \$80,000, and they're going to do something with the 80,000.

Now, the way the economy works is that as they make a purchase with the 80,000; somebody has to manufacture or fix up or take care of the product they're buying—in this case, a mezzanine or a bucket truck or a service van. Somebody has to make that for them, which means somebody is going to work as a result of the investment. So when you hear people say investment equals jobs, that's what that means. They're making an investment. Somebody has to manufacture the product that they're purchasing, which means as the economy grows, more people are going to find work. And the tax relief we passed said to them, "If you make an investment, you get additional tax relief." That's how it works. That's why the tax relief we passed is so vitally important to economic vitality and growth.

Remember, they're a Subchapter S corp. This is important because there is talk in Washington about raising taxes.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* Oh, yes. I know. But that's just the way they think over there sometimes. [*Laughter*] In other words, when you hear them say, "Tax the rich

in order to spend for—in order to pay for bigger spending programs,” I want people to think about Lapp Electrical. They’re talking about raising the top rates; they’re taxing small businesses. The economy is strong. It’s getting stronger. Now is not the time to be taxing small businesses in America. Now is not the time to be raising taxes at all.

Here’s what Greg said about tax relief: “It helped us pull out of the lull quicker than we would have.” That’s positive, isn’t it? In other words, they were in a lull. It’s called recession. Actually, in his case, it was like neutral. “Now, we’re so ridiculously busy,” says Greg, “that we need to hire more people to get everything done.” That’s exciting news. There’s a lot of Gregs all over America who are ridiculously busy that they see a better future, that they’re confident, that they’re willing to invest \$80,000. See, things are getting better in America. The spirit is strong. The great entrepreneurial spirit of America is vibrant, and we intend to keep it that way.

With us as well is Tim King. Thanks for coming, Tim. Tim is sitting next to Jenna. He was a telecommunications technician, served in the United States Air Force, lost his job last year. That’s hard when that happens. It’s not easy, wondering what’s going to go on. Fortunately, the economy is growing. Fortunately, things are such that Lapp Electric was willing to hire Tim. He’s gainfully employed here. In other words, the tax relief not only encourages nice statistics, but here’s a fellow here whose life, that I can say to you directly has been improved. He said, “It’s an excellent work atmosphere here. I have a larger variety of work to do.” He’s working here because the economy is getting better. I think he’s working here because the tax relief we passed has made a difference in stimulating economic growth and vitality. I appreciate you letting me use you as an example, and I’m glad you’re back at work. I’m glad you’re here.

There are about 900,000 small-business owners in Pennsylvania that enjoy a lower tax burden, thanks to the work we did. That’s good news. Tax relief also has an effect on American families. A lot of times in Washington, we just—well, we seem to overlook what tax relief has meant for people. We talk about it. But what I like to do is let people’s own stories carry the philosophy.

Tim and Dawn Martin are with us today from Lancaster. Thank you for coming. I see you’ve got your two lads. I appreciate you bringing them. As you can see, they’re a young family—Nathaniel and Ian. Because of tax relief, the Martins saved \$1,700 off their taxes last year. Now, I know for a lot of them there in Washington, 1,700 doesn’t seem like much. Just ask the Martins what it feels like, though. That’s what matters. It doesn’t matter what people think in Washington. What matters is what these people think. It’s their money. It’s 1,700 more dollars in their pocket. Here’s what he said. He said, “It makes us feel more comfortable.” That’s important. You know, confidence has a lot to do with whether an economy grows. When you’re comfortable, you’re confident or more likely to be confident. “We’re able to put money aside for our children’s future education.”

One of the things the Martins know is that their most important duty, their most important responsibility as a mom or a dad, is to love their children with all their heart and all their soul. And I appreciate that spirit of prioritizing your children’s education. The tax relief we passed enables them to do so. It makes a lot of sense.

By the way, part of the tax relief is the fact we raised—comes from the fact we raised the child credit to \$1,000. Part of it happened because we created a new 10-percent bracket, and part of it happened because we’re beginning to reduce the negative effects of what they call the marriage penalty. I’ve always been slightly perplexed by why do you have a Tax Code that penalizes marriage. I mean, it seems like one

of the things that we ought to be doing in America is encouraging marriage, not penalizing marriage.

All those three tax relief packages are getting ready to expire. See, Congress passed it, but in order to make the numbers work, they said, "Well, some of it will expire." My attitude is that it ought not to expire because if it expires, it raises taxes on the people like the Martins. They're comfortable now. They're going to be not so comfortable when the Government gets back in their pocket for some of the money that they expect is coming their way. I'm calling on the Congress once again to make sure that these aspects, at the very minimum, these parts of the tax relief plan, remain permanent, that they don't go away, that they don't raise the taxes.

No, I'm upbeat about this economy of ours. But my job is not only to think about today, but it's to think about what life is going to look like 5 years from now or 10 years from now. We have an opportunity to do some things today to make sure that America is the most competitive place in the world to do business so that people can find work. Let me give you a couple of ideas right quick.

First of all, I'm concerned about what health care costs do to companies like Lapp Electrical. Premiums are going up. There's some smart things we can do. One, we have passed what's called health savings accounts, which will enable consumers to be able to save tax-free and have a better relationship—for your medical expenses—and better afford catastrophic care and which, by the way, will keep the link between patient and doctor intact.

There is a philosophical debate going on in Washington about who is the best decisionmaker for health care. A lot of them up there think that it's the Federal Government. Of course, I don't. I think it's the consumers. I think it's the people. I think it's the patients that should be empowered to make the decisions for what is best for them.

I believe in association health plans. This is kind of a fancy word for allowing small businesses to pool with other small businesses to be able to spread risk so that their premiums are lower for their employees. You can't do that today. The Federal Government needs to allow Lapp Electrical to team up with the equivalent in Texas so that there's purchasing power for small businesses. That will enable the owners of this business to be able to have a more affordable health insurance for their employees.

Finally, I'll tell you, in order to make sure we've got reasonable health care costs, we've got to do something about the frivolous and junk lawsuits. Listen, we're too—there's too many lawsuits here that are running up the—these lawsuits—look, if you're hurt, you ought to have your day in court, no question about it. But lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit is running up the cost of medicine, and it's running doctors out of practice. You've got an acute problem here in Pennsylvania, as you know. I remember coming to your State and talking to doctors and hearing their stories about not being able to heal here. And they want to. They want to practice their trade. They want to help people, but they can't afford to stay.

When I first got to Washington, I looked carefully at this issue. As a former Governor, I thought it was a State issue, and then I realized how much it cost our Federal Government. The defensive practice of medicine costs the Federal Government billions because of—we're providing a lot of money for Medicare and Medicaid and veterans' health benefits. These junk lawsuits are costing the taxpayers once at the State level and another time at the Federal level. So I decided it was a Federal issue and, therefore, called upon a Federal—for a Federal solution.

We got it out of the House. Of course, it's stuck in the Senate—[laughter]—stuck in the Senate. A lot of the tort reform is stuck in the Senate. I don't think you

can be pro-small-business and pro-trial-lawyer. You've got to pick. I'm pro-small-business.

A couple of other points I want to make right quick. In order for the Lapp Electricals of the world to be able to grow or any other business in Pennsylvania to be able to grow, we've got to have a reasonable energy policy. I mean, people talk to me about the manufacturing sector a lot, and obviously, I want manufacturing jobs to be—to stay here and for the manufacturing sector to grow, which it's now doing, by the way. But it's going to be hard for the country to maintain a manufacturing base if we don't have reliable supplies of energy. Imagine trying to run a manufacturing company with sophisticated equipment, and you're not certain whether or not the electricity you turn on is going to be available. Remember, we had a blackout, and it wasn't all that long ago. We need to modernize our electricity grids if we expect to stay competitive.

We're very dependent on foreign sources of oil and natural gas. It seems like to me it make sense to encourage conservation, to use research and development to find alternative sources of energy, but also to use the resources we have in an environmentally friendly way. Listen, we've got a lot of coal; we need to be burning coal. We've got the ability to find natural gas in our own continent. We can do so in an environmentally friendly way. For the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, this country must be wise about its energy policy and become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We have been working on this for a couple of years. It's stuck in the Senate. Well, actually it's stuck in conference—that's not fair. But the Congress needs to get together and get a bill to my desk. They just need to.

Trade is a big issue. I know people are concerned about trade. Here's the issue. Most Presidents prior to me agreed that

we ought to open up U.S. markets for foreign goods. You know why? It's good for consumers. It's good for the American people. If you have more choice in products, you're bound to get better quality at better price. That's just the nature of the way the economy works. In other words, if there's more choice for consumers, prices will be better, as will quality.

The issue really has been whether or not other countries are opening up their markets like we have ours. That's the issue, as far as I'm concerned. And so my job is to say to China, "Open up your markets." My job is to say to Europe, "Open up your markets." And we're making progress. Just ask the farmers here in Pennsylvania what it's like in the farm economy today. You know why? We're selling a lot of farm product overseas. Look, we're good at something—we're good at growing things—we ought to be selling things everywhere around the world. My job is to say, "Open up your markets. If ours is open, yours needs to be open." Just give us a chance to compete, and America can out-compete anybody, anytime, anywhere.

And so we've got to reject economic isolationism. It just doesn't make any sense for the future of this economy of ours. If we want people working in America, let's be confident. Let's just make sure the playing field is level, give our workers a chance. We've got the most productive workforce in the world. And a fair chance to compete means America wins, as far as I'm concerned.

Finally, this economy of ours is also a changing economy. I don't know if Tim found that or not, but there's different types of jobs that are now becoming available. And therefore, we better have the ability to train workers for the jobs which actually exist. A lot of times, we've got great, decent people willing to work, but they don't have the skillset necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

I'm thinking about, for example, when I was in North Carolina seeing textile workers—[*applause*]*—there you go. Thank you, sir—[laughter]*—seeing textile workers now working in the health care field because they got the training necessary to change skillset. And one place to make sure that that is effective, that we're able to have that job training effectively, is at the community college system.

Community colleges are available. They're affordable. And the best thing of all is they're flexible. In other words, when the health care system of a particular town says, "Gosh, I need nurses," the community college ought to say, "Let me—design the curriculum with me so I can train workers." One of the key components of whether or not we're going to be able to survive in the 21st century is whether we've got a workforce trained for the jobs of the 21st century. And that's a great challenge of our country. And we've got the assets in place to do it. I'm willing to put up money from the Federal level to see to it that the community college programs are vibrant and alive and active and well for training these good folks for the jobs which actually exist.

So here are some ideas as to how to make sure America is competitive, the best place in the world to do business, the best place where the entrepreneurial spirit can continue to flourish and be strong.

I also told you I want to be President again because I want to keep America safer. That's my solemn duty, is to protect the American people. It was a solemn duty that really became so evident on September the 11th, 2001. I mean, the enemy hit us in a way that was nearly impossible for anybody to dream that they would attack us, using our own airplanes to kill thousands of innocent people, a sudden attack. It says a couple of things about the nature of these people. They are coldblooded killers. They're not religious people. They've hijacked a great religion. They think they're religious, but they're not. Their hearts are filled with evil. They are—you can't nego-

tiate with them. There is no peace treaty you can sign with these kind of people. They've got a dim vision of the world.

I resolved then that I will do whatever it takes to defend America. My duty is to do everything I can to protect our country. I called a good man into action named Ridge. You might remember him. His job is to see to it that the Homeland Security Department functions well, and he's doing a great job. And it's not easy—it's not easy. For the first-responders who are here—that would be your firefighters and your police and your EMS teams—I thank you for the job you're doing. We're all working together. We're on the frontlines.

We're communicating better. We're sharing information better. We've now got the FBI and the CIA sharing information. We've got divisions within the FBI sharing information. Before September the 11th, we couldn't have the criminal division and the intelligence division of the FBI even talking to each other about certain cases. No wonder information slipped through the net. That's why we passed what they call the PATRIOT Act.

So—by the way, let me say something about the PATRIOT Act. Nothing happens without court order. The same rules that we're using to catch drug lords is now—we're finally starting to apply to terrorists. It's essential that these tools stay in place if we expect to be safe.

Anyway, I decided then and there that I'd do everything to defend the country, so we set up this Department of Homeland Security. But we've got to be 100 percent correct here at home; they've got to be right once. And therefore, the best way, really, to defend the country is to stay on the offensive, is to find these killers before they get here, is to use every asset we have, everything at our disposal to hunt down these evildoers and bring them to justice, which is exactly what I will continue to do as your President.

We're making progress. Two-thirds of the known Al Qaida leaders are—have been



brought to justice, and we're slowly but surely, methodically, finding them and bringing them to justice. It's hard work, and we've got some really fine people working hard, really fine people. A lot of them wear the uniform of the United States military.

Politicians make a lot of promises, I know, and I've tried to do everything I can to meet them. One of the promises I did make is that help is on the way. When I—2000, Dick Cheney and I were campaigning, we used to go to see the military—go to a military base or talk to military families. Our pledge was, help is on the way. Help has happened. Our military is strong, vibrant, skilled. They're getting paid better, and they're getting housed better. They're getting all they need, and that's what they deserve.

Listen, I—as the Commander in Chief, I've got to be able to tell the husbands and wives and the moms and dads, we're doing everything we can, everything we can to make sure you've got what you need to help us do our duty, which is to protect America.

A second lesson in all this business is that when a President says something, he better mean it. In order to make the world more peaceful, the President must speak clearly and mean what he says. I said, "If you harbor a terrorist"—I said the first thing is we will find—we will stay on the offense and bring Al Qaida to justice. And then I said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist." In other words, I was sending a message to those who felt like that they could maybe give Al Qaida safe haven and maybe we would just ignore it. But that's not how you make sure America is secure. You not only have to deal with Al Qaida and their affiliates and friends, but you have to say to people, "Don't provide safe haven for them." In other words, you've got to keep them on the run.

As you might recall, the Taliban in Afghanistan were providing safe haven for

these people. We gave them an ultimatum. They, of course, didn't believe it. And we went in. And we went in to not only eliminate the training bases and the safe havens for Al Qaida, to protect ourselves; we also went in to liberate the people of Afghanistan from the Taliban.

These people, as I mentioned to you earlier, are barbaric people. America weeps when they know that young girls are brutalized by a government. And that doesn't—that's not our value system. We care about human suffering. This is a compassionate country. And we also understand that when people are free, they're going to be peaceful.

And so we did a couple of things in Afghanistan. One, we liberated the people. Secondly, we got rid of Al Qaida safe havens. And thirdly, Afghanistan is now on the road to democracy, and Afghanistan is an ally and a friend in our task to make America more secure.

And then, as you know, I looked at intelligence and facts, and I came to the conclusion that Saddam Hussein was a threat to America. You see, because the other lesson of September the 11th is when we see a gathering threat, that we've got to deal with it—sooner, rather than later; that we can't hope that a gathering threat just goes away. That's the lesson of September the 11th.

And, therefore, I went to the United Nations and said, "Listen, I've looked at this intelligence, and it says he's a threat." I also, during my talk, reminded them that the guy had actually used weapons of mass destruction on his own people and that he had harbored terrorists. Abu Nidal is a terrorist. As you might recall, he killed an American. This guy Zargawi got hospital aid there in Baghdad when Saddam Hussein was in power. He was the guy running a poisons factory in northeast Iraq. He's still in Iraq. He's the guy killing a lot of innocent people, ordering suiciders, bragging about it, cutting people's heads off. He's an Al Qaida affiliate. In other words, it was a safe haven. And the Congress

looked at the very same intelligence I did, the exact same intelligence, and came to the same conclusion: He's a threat. Interestingly enough, so did the United Nations.

Remember, I went to the United Nations and said, "We've got a problem here. As a matter of fact, it's such a problem that I think you probably have passed over a dozen resolutions saying he's a problem, and yet nothing has happened." And so I said, "Why don't we pass one and really mean what we say." And so with a 15-to-nothing vote, the United Nations Security Council did just that—15 to nothing—said, "He's a threat." "Disclose, destroy, or face serious consequences," is what the United Nations said, a collection of nations.

So we all felt the same thing back there. And of course, Saddam Hussein defied, and he just ignored what the free world had to say once again. Now, once you say something, you better mean it. At least that's the way I think. And we said "serious consequences." We meant serious consequences. I had a choice to make: Either trust this madman, who clearly hated America, who had—was fooling around with terrorists, who had used weapons of mass destruction and we had thought had weapons of mass destruction—take his word for it, or defend the country. Given the lessons of September the 11th, I chose to defend the country. And that's exactly what I would do again. America is a more secure place because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power.

The Senate is looking at intelligence failures, and should. We all ought to welcome an investigation about where we went right and wrong with our intelligence gathering. You know why? Because it's important for a President and the Congress to get the best intelligence possible in this war against these terrorists. One of the key components of finding out who is going to hurt us is good intelligence. And there are a lot of really good people working in our intelligence gathering, by the way—dedicated, solid, fine Americans. They too want the

intelligence services to be as effective as possible. So I welcome their investigation. I really do.

And like Members of the Senate and the House, we thought there would be stockpiles of weapons. We haven't found them yet. We do know, however, and I just want you to remember this, that the man had the capacity to make weapons. He had the ability to make weapons. He had the intent and the capability, which is why I say I would have done it again, because he's a dangerous person.

The work is hard in Iraq right now. It's really hard because we're trying to take people from a society run by a tyrant to a free society. We've done this kind of work before, though. I want our fellow citizens to remember that. After World War II, we helped to rebuild Germany and Japan. And that wasn't easy. If you go back and look at the history, you'll find that there was articles written about how the reconstruction effort wasn't properly planned, why the societies were still violent, how maybe Japan couldn't conceivably self-govern because of its past history. There were a lot of skeptics and pessimists about the ability of liberty to have a transforming effect on societies. And I can understand that. It's hard work.

But fortunately, my predecessors didn't listen to the skeptics. And today, I'm able to sit down with the Prime Minister of Japan and discuss key issues like North Korea. In other words, a former enemy—former enemies sit at a table together and say, "How can we work to keep the peace," because there were people that preceded me that had great faith in the ability of freedom to change societies.

The Iraqi people want to be free. We've got a good leader there named Allawi. He's a tough guy. He's a strong guy. He's dedicated to a pluralistic, self-governing society. He's courageous enough to get them there. He just needs America to stand by his side. The terrorists have got—they've got an advantage over us: They don't have hearts,

and we do. They kill in the hope that we—our hearts will be so full with sorrow, like they are every time, that we'll forget our promise and that we'll leave. We're not leaving. We will stand.

Let me tell you an interesting story. I'm probably going on—am I going on too long? *[Laughter]* Either Laura or Jenna will give me the hook. *[Laughter]* Let me tell you an interesting story. They said that they've got some people from Iraq coming to see you. The door opens up in the Oval Office—which, by the way, is a fantastic place. It's a shrine to democracy. It's a powerful office. Just being in there is such an honor. And in walk seven people who have had their right hands cut off by Saddam Hussein. These were small-business guys. And not only did they have their right hands cut off, they had X's carved on their foreheads by the Hussein henchmen. The currency of the country had devalued, and he needed a scapegoat, so he found seven small merchants to blame the currency devaluation on and punished them by cutting off their right hands.

I asked one guy, "Well, why you?" He said, well, he was a jeweler, and he sold dinars to buy—I think it was either dollars or euros so he could get gold to use as a product for his jewelry. And they round him up—of course, no jury, no press looking after human rights, nothing.

He cut off seven hands off. Interestingly enough, a documentary was made of these seven guys, and the documentary was seen by a Houston newsman named Marvin Zindler. He is the—I don't know if you ever saw "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," the play. He's the guy, the newsman, that discovered this place in central Texas—anyway, famous in Texas, at least. *[Laughter]* But he started a foundation years ago to help people. And he saw the story, and he flew them over.

And so these seven guys walk in with new hands as well, because in Houston they had been outfitted because of the compassion of this American. In other

words, what a contrast, isn't it, the brutality of a tyrant and the compassion of an individual citizen.

And they came in, and one guy took his new hand—they're just learning to use their hands—and he wrote "God Bless America" in Arabic. I nearly broke out in tears right there, it was such an emotional—I said, "Welcome to the Oval Office." I said, "I'm glad you're here." I said, "You don't have to worry about America. When we say we're going to do something, we'll do it, and we will stand with you so your children can grow up in a free society, which will make us more secure."

See, a free Iraq, free societies in the Middle East are in the long-term interest of America. In the short term, we get after them with every asset we got. In the long term, we defeat terror and darkness with the light of democracy and freedom. That's what we believe. Look what happened in Japan and Germany. And I'm telling you, it can happen.

Anyway, I told these guys, I said, "It's good you're in the Oval Office because I want to tell you something about our society. The office of the President is bigger than the person. This is a great place to meet because it's a chance to remind you that in your new country, when you've survived, the institutions you put in place will be bigger than the people, and therefore, your society will be stable, and you're more likely to be free."

Now, finally, I want your vote because I want to make America a better place—a better place. There's a lot of ways we can do so. I want to make sure the education system works well. I'm telling you, the No Child Left Behind Act is a good piece of legislation. We spent more money than we ever have at the Federal level. At the same time, we said we trust local people to make decisions for their schools, and we did something else that I thought was very wise. We said, "Show us the results." For too often we'd just spend money and hope for the best, and guess what

would happen? Kids whose parents didn't speak English as a first language just get shuffled through the system—the hard-to-educate, inner-city kids—“Just move them through. Maybe they'll learn; maybe they won't.” That's not good enough for the 21st century, and it's certainly not good enough for me.

And so we've raised the bar. And we said, “You're going to get more money, but now you're going to devise accountability tests to show us whether the kids can learn,” to read, for example. We want every child reading at grade level by the third grade. That's what we want, right? Seems like a reasonable national goal to me. That's not too hard to ask in America, to say, “How about just reading at the third-grade level? And if you don't, there will be remedial help, and the parents will get more choice.” In other words, there needs to be accountability.

And it's working. We've raised the bar. We're saying, “Show us whether or not the kids can read and write and add and subtract.” We're paying for curriculum that works. Listen, some reading programs work; some of them don't. You know what I'm talking about. And the best way to determine whether yours does is to measure. And that's what we're doing with local control of schools. See, we called it the No Child Left Behind Act. That's exactly what I mean. I don't want any children left behind in America. I want everybody to be able to realize their full potential. And so a better America is going to come when our public schools get better, and they are. They are.

Another way to make sure America is a better place is to surround people with love. The Government is not a loving organization, however. [*Laughter*] Government is law and justice. Love comes from the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. Love is found in our churches and mosques and synagogues. Love is found in those kind of daily acts of kindness that take place all the time not because of governmental

law, because—many times because of a higher law. And it happens in America every single day. The strength of this country is the hearts and souls of the American people, and a President must understand that.

And so we started what I call the Community and Faith-Based Initiative, which says we're going to open up Federal monies to applications for grants from faith-based organizations. I mean, if you want somebody to quit drinking, sometimes you have to change his heart and therefore change his behavior. Not every time—it doesn't have to happen every time. But a lot of times, if you change a person's heart, good chance they're going to change their behavior. And faith-based organizations are pretty good at changing hearts. That's why they exist, isn't it? And so Government must be willing to allow faith-based programs to access Federal money without causing the faith-based program to change their mission. How can you practice to be a faith-based program if you cannot practice your faith?

And so what I'm telling you is, is that part of a changing and better America is for Government to understand—or for the person, for the President to understand the true strength of the country and be willing to rally that strength. We're going to change America one heart at a time, one soul at a time, because the American people are so loving and so caring and so decent. And one of my jobs is to call upon that decency and to rally the armies of compassion.

Listen, I am honored that you came out and given me a chance to share with you my vision for a safer, stronger, better America. I'm here asking for the vote. I'm working for the vote, because I have something to do. I've got a reason to serve. There are things I want to do to make this country the greatest country it can possibly be. It's a honor to serve America. Thank you for coming, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. in the warehouse at Lapp Electrical Service, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Charles W. Dent and Scott Paterno, candidates for Pennsylvania's 15th and 17th Congressional Districts, respectively; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Palestinian terrorist

Abu Nidal, who was found dead in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 19, 2002; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government.

## Remarks in York, Pennsylvania July 9, 2004

*The President.* Thank you all. I'm honored you're here. We've had a fantastic day in the great State of Pennsylvania. See my little bus there? We've been traveling the backroads of this great State. It's so beautiful. All kinds of people came out to say hello. And what a great place to end a great trip, in York, Pennsylvania. Thanks for coming.

You probably know this, but for 9 months in 1777 and 1778, York was the capital of the United States. Today, York is the capital of Bush-Cheney country.

I want to thank all my fellow Republicans. I want to thank the discerning Democrats and wise independents who are here today. I'm proud you're here. I'm here to let you know that I have the desire, the drive, and the vision to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

*Audience members.* Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

*The President.* I'm back in this important State to ask for the vote. And I'm here in this crowd to ask for your help. Register your friends and neighbors. Work those phones. Put up the signs. If you want to help, go onto [georgewbush.com](http://georgewbush.com) on the Internet. You can find out how to sign up to help. I'm counting on you. And together we will win a great victory in Pennsylvania and a great victory across this Nation on November the 2d.

You know how many people running for President would love to have Joe Paterno

introduce him in Pennsylvania? Everybody who has ever run for President wants Joe Paterno to introduce him. [Laughter] But in the year 2004, there's only one, and I'm honored it's me. I want to thank you, Joe. Thank you very much for being here. I'm proud of the example you set. You're a fine, fine, fine American. And you raised a fine son in Scott. We need to send him to the United States Congress—Scott Paterno.

I regret that Laura is not here. I'm going to give you all kinds of reasons to send me back to Washington today, but probably the most important one is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. I'm really proud of her. She's a fantastic, fantastic woman. I love her dearly. We talked to her on the phone on the bus; she sent her best. And in her stead, traveling with me today is a new graduate from the University of Texas, one of my great daughters, Jenna Bush. Made it through in 4 years, I want you to know.

Proud to be here on stage and traveling today with a fine United States Senator, Senator Rick Santorum. What a fine job Congressman Todd Platts is doing for the people of this area. Where's your mother? There's Mom, right there. She made me some fudge. [Laughter] I'm going to run all day—well, I'm going to bike all day tomorrow. [Laughter] Thanks for the fudge; I actually had some.